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Culture of peace

Promotion and protection of human rights

Letter dated 2 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as Chair of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement, I have the honour to enclose herewith the Tehran Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted at the Non-Aligned Movement Ministerial Meeting on Human Rights and Cultural Diversity, held in Tehran on 3 and 4 September 2007 (see annex).

I kindly request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 49 and 70.

(*Signed*) Rodrigo **Malmierca Díaz**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 2 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Tehran Declaration and Programme of Action on Human Rights and Cultural Diversity

Adopted at the Non-Aligned Movement Ministerial Meeting on Human Rights and Cultural Diversity, held in Tehran, 3 and 4 September 2007

The Ministers and other Heads of Delegation from Member Countries of the Non-Aligned Movement met in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, on 3 and 4 September 2007, at the "Ministerial Meeting on Human Rights and Cultural Diversity",

I. Renewing their commitment to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms including the right to preserve cultural identity which is a defining characteristic of humanity and forms a common heritage of humanity,

II. Emphasizing that tolerance, due respect for others and their rights to freely determine their own approach towards progressive development are fundamental values essential to international relations,

III. Recognizing that cultural diversity and the pursuit of cultural development by all peoples and nations are a source of mutual enrichment for the cultural life of humankind,

IV. Reaffirming the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, underscoring the validity and relevance of the Movement's principled positions concerning inter alia, development of friendly relations among nations based on equal rights and, the right of all peoples to self-determination, by virtue of which they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development, achieving international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character, and the respect for human rights and fundamental freedom for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion,

V. Also reaffirming the sovereign equality of the United Nations members who shall refrain from any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of a State, which is incompatible with the UN Charter,

VI. Reaffirming that cultural diversity is a cherished asset for the advancement and welfare of humanity at large and should be valued, enjoyed, genuinely accepted and embraced as a permanent feature which enriches our societies,

VII. Recognizing in each culture a dignity and value that deserve recognition, respect and preservation, and convinced that all cultures share

a common set of universal values and in their rich variety and diversity, and in the reciprocal influences that they exert on one another, they all form part of the common heritage belonging to all humankind,

VIII. Emphasizing that a collective commitment to listen to and learn from each other and to respect cultural heritage and diversity are essential for dialogue, progress and human advancement,

IX. Considering that tolerance and respect for cultural, ethnic, and religious and linguistic diversities, as well as equitable and mutually respectful dialogue among and within civilizations, are essential for peace, understanding and friendship among individuals and people of different cultures and nations of the world, while manifestations of cultural prejudice, intolerance and xenophobia towards different cultures and religions may generate hatred and violence among peoples and nations throughout the world,

X. Reaffirming that tolerance is not only a moral duty but also a political and legal requirement, that makes peace possible through the respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's culture and our forms of expression and ways of being human,

XI. Reaffirming also the determination to contribute to enhanced international cooperation in solving current problems of the world to create such conditions as will ensure that the needs and interest of future generations are not jeopardized by the burden of the past,

XII. Committing themselves to make every effort to ensure full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, so that future as well as present generations enjoy full freedom of choice as to their political, economic and social systems and are able to preserve their cultural and religious diversity,

XIII. Expressing concern on the adverse impacts caused by lack of respect to and recognition of cultural diversity to human rights, justice, friendship and the fundamental right to development,

XIV. Underlining that the process of globalization constitutes a powerful and dynamic force which should be harnessed for the benefit, development and prosperity of all countries, without exclusion,

XV. Deploring any attempts or efforts to use economic might as an instrument to impose cultural domination on others,

XVI. Convinced that cultural diversity in a globalizing world needs to be used as a vehicle for creativity, dynamism and promoting social justice, tolerance and understanding as well as international peace and security, and not as a rationale for a new ideological and political confrontation,

XVII. Declaring that any doctrine based on racial, or cultural superiority is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous, and must be strongly rejected as a ground and manifestation of apartheid and

expressing deep concern on the cultural uprooting which is continuously unfolding in the Palestinian occupied territory and the occupied Syrian Golan on the basis of such doctrines by the occupying power,

XVIII. Reaffirming that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated and that the international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis, and that, while the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms,

XIX. Resolving to take all measures to secure a democratic and equitable international order based on dialogue, cooperation, increased intercultural exchange and to prevent of cultural homogenization and domination,

XX. Acknowledging the fundamental role that women and youth play in promoting respect for cultural diversity,

XXI. Affirming the need for all States to continue their efforts to enhance dialogue and broaden understanding among civilizations, in an effort to prevent the targeting of different cultures and religions, and contribute to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and disputes,

XXII. Emphasizing the importance to prohibit by law any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, and to enforce these laws,

XXIII. Denouncing the attempts to identify any culture with terrorism, violence and human rights violations,

Adopted the following Programme of Action,

International commitment to respect cultural diversity

The Ministers and other Heads of Delegation,

1. Affirmed the importance for all peoples and nations to hold, develop and preserve their cultural heritage in a national and international atmosphere of peace, tolerance and mutual respect;

2. Stressed the necessity of respecting cultural diversity and maximizing its benefit, through working together to build a harmonious and productive future by putting into practice and promoting values and principles such as justice, equality and nondiscrimination, democracy, fairness and friendship, tolerance and respect within and among communities and nations;

3. Noted that the world today is composed of States with diverse political, social and cultural systems and religions determined by their history, traditions, values and cultural diversity, whose stability can be guaranteed

by the universal recognition of their right to freely determine their own approach towards progressive development. In this context, emphasized that respect for the diversity of such systems and approach is a core value which relations and cooperation among States in an increasingly globalizing world should be based on, with the aim of contributing to establishing a peaceful and prosperous world, a just and equitable world order, and an environment conducive to exchanging human experiences;

4. Recognized the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds and urged all actors on the international scene to contribute to the building of international order based on inclusion, justice, equality and equity, human dignity, mutual understanding and promotion of, and respect for cultural diversity and universal human rights;

5. Recognized that respect for cultural diversity and the cultural rights of all contributes to a wider exchange of knowledge and understanding of cultural background, advancing the application and enjoyment of universally accepted human rights throughout the world and fostering stable and friendly relations among peoples and nations worldwide;

6. Called upon the international community to strive to respond to the challenges and opportunities posed by globalization in a manner that ensures respect for the cultural diversity of all;

7. Expressed their determination to prevent and mitigate cultural homogenization as well as uniculturalism in the context of globalization, through increased intercultural dialogue and exchange guided by enhancing respect for and observance of cultural diversity;

8. Called upon the international community to maximize the benefits of globalization through, inter alia, the strengthening and enhancement of international cooperation and global communications for the promotion of understanding and respect for cultural diversity. They further emphasized that only through broad and sustained efforts to create a shared future based upon common humanity, and all its diversity, can globalization be made fully inclusive and equitable;

9. Called upon all members of international community to avoid discriminatory or preferential treatments toward other nations and cultures, as they are detrimental to the principles of equity;

10. Recognized that acts of prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping, and racial, religious and sectarian profiling are affronts to human dignity, equality and justice, and should not be condoned;

11. Called upon all members of international community to guarantee the right of all to have access to a culture of their own and to develop it creatively, as well as their right and duty to know and respect other cultures;

12. Expressed their solidarity to face the growing attempts to create a new form of colonialism and uniculturalism, which surreptitiously permeate people, destroying the basic values and core principles of their own societies, in as much as industrialized countries seek to impose their values, opinions and lifestyles on developing countries, to the detriment, and even the loss, of cultural identities;

13. Underlined the necessity to develop and implement policies and actions plans, and to reinforce and implement preventive measures, in order to foster greater harmony and tolerance between migrants and host societies;

14. Urged all members of the international community to implement specific measures involving the host community and migrants in order to encourage respect for cultural diversity, to promote the fair treatment of migrants and to develop programmes, where appropriate to facilitate their integration into social, cultural, political and economic life without undermining the right to return to motherland;

15. Welcomed the decisions of the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council to convene the Durban Review Conference in 2009, Called upon the Durban Review Conference and its Preparatory process to encourage debates on promotion of respect for cultural diversity among all nations, in the context of global fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;

16. Recognized that foreign occupation hinders the enjoyment of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. Condemned the inhumane measures imposed by the occupying power on the Palestinian people including border closures, severe restrictions on the movement of people, destruction of homes and vital infrastructure, including religious, educational, cultural and historical sites and all the actions designed to change the legal status, geographical nature and demographic composition of the occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan and destroy their cultural heritage, and called upon the international community to take all appropriate measures to bring an end to this tragic and intolerable situation;

<u>Dialogue and cooperation essential for enriching the universality of human rights</u>

The Ministers and other Heads of Delegation,

17. Reaffirmed that equitable and mutually respectful dialogue among and between cultures and civilizations including in the field of human rights, would facilitate the promotion of a culture of tolerance and respect for diversity and contribute greatly to the enhancement of international cooperation in this field;

18. Reaffirmed the commitment of international community to promoting international cooperation, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations,

in particular Article 1, paragraph 3, as well as relevant provisions of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993 for enhancing genuine cooperation among Member States in the field of human rights;

19. Affirmed the importance of encouragement and development of international contacts and cooperation in the cultural fields and that intercultural dialogue essentially enriches the common understanding of human rights and prevents cultural imposition on nations;

20. Called upon all states, relevant international organizations and non governmental organizations to support and embark on intercultural initiatives on human rights in order to promote the common understanding of the human rights standards, thus enriching the universality of human rights;

21. Reiterated that all human rights are equal and that the exercise of any right should not be at the expense of the enjoyment of other rights;

Raising awareness and understanding of the benefits of cultural diversity

The Ministers and other Heads of Delegation,

22. Agreed that education is the best tool to raise understanding of cultural differences and to foster respect for cultural diversity;

23. Called upon all countries to design and implement policies whereby educational systems proclaim the principles of tolerance, respect for others and cultural diversity;

24. Called upon all members of international community to promote through education an awareness of the positive value of cultural diversity and improve to this end both curriculum design and teacher education;

25. Encouraged the incorporation of programmes to study various cultures and civilizations in educational curriculums, including the teaching of languages, history and socio-political thoughts of various civilizations, as well as the exchange of knowledge, information and scholarship among academia;

26. Encouraged Governments to promote, including through education, as well as the development of progressive curricula and textbooks, understanding, tolerance and friendship among human beings in all their diversity of religion, belief, culture and language, which will address the cultural, social, economic, political and religious sources of intolerance, and to apply a gender perspective while doing so, in order to promote understanding, tolerance, peace and friendly relations among nations and all racial and religious groups, recognizing that education at all levels is one of the principal means to build a culture of peace;

27. Urged States, as appropriate in cooperation with relevant organizations, including youth organizations, to support and implement public formal and non-formal education programmes designed to promote respect for cultural diversity;

28. Reaffirmed the importance of human rights education as an important tool for the promotion and teaching of the values of tolerance and respect for cultural diversity. In this regard, they recognized the importance of the elaboration by the United Nations of an international instrument on human rights education and training;

Role of Media

The Ministers and other Heads of Delegation,

29. Emphasized that the media should act as a mechanism to universalize ideas on tolerance, respect for cultural diversity and the right to cultural development, and to spread human values rather than serve as a tool to accentuate the disparities and imbalances prevailing in the fields of information and communication. In this context, called upon the international community to exert all its efforts to bridge the digital gap between developed and developing countries;

30. Stressed on the necessity of utilizing communication technologies, including audio, video, printed press, multimedia and the Internet, to disseminate the message of dialogue and understanding throughout the globe and depict and publicize historical instances of constructive interaction among different cultures and civilizations;

31. Emphasized the rejection of exerting intellectual and cultural domination to other countries by the media, through prevailing trend of monopolizing information that gradually restricts freedom and imposes cultural hegemony,

32. Recognized the importance of the media in developing a better understanding among all religions, beliefs, cultures and peoples and to facilitate a dialogue among societies, as well as to create an environment conducive to the exchange of human experience and urged to continue their efforts in promoting interfaith and intercultural understanding and cooperation for peace, development and human dignity;

33. Underlined the necessity to develop a universal strategy to promote responsibility, ethical and professional conduct, in the media and the professional press and their activities, which in turn will contribute to a genuine mutual respect in human interactions;

Cultural institutes and activities

The Ministers and other Heads of Delegation,

34. Highlighted the role of relevant governmental and non governmental organizations and institutions in promoting the principles of tolerance and respect for cultural diversity through organizing appropriate cultural initiatives and activities with due respect to their capacities;

35. Reaffirmed the important role of tourism and the necessity of enhancement of tourism as an effective mechanism to promote peace, understanding and mutual respect and helping the different cultures and peoples know about each other;

36. While appreciating the numerous efforts within the United Nations system in general and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in particular in promoting respect for cultural diversity and human rights, encouraged them to continue to contribute to educational, scientific and cultural initiatives in this regard;

Role of academia

The Ministers and other Heads of Delegation,

37. Emphasized the role of the academia in promoting awareness of the positive value of different cultures and respect for cultural diversity;

38. Stressed the necessity to engage further the academia in enriching intercultural dialogue on human rights, contributing to a wider exchange of knowledge and common understanding of cultural backgrounds;

39. Called upon all relevant scholars, academic institutions and think tanks to intensify their efforts to enhance their interactions and dialogue on human rights and cultural diversity and disseminate their findings;

United Nations, International Organizations and Civil Society

The Ministers and other Heads of Delegation,

40. Encouraged all relevant United Nations bodies to undertake appropriate initiatives for the promotion of intercultural dialogue on human rights;

41. Invited the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to support the initiatives of different actors to promote intercultural dialogue on human rights and to mainstream the question of human rights and cultural diversity within the United Nations human rights mechanisms and machinery;

42. Encouraged civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to recognize and promote respect for cultural diversity for the purpose of advancing peace, development and universal human rights;

43. Urged relevant international organizations to conduct studies on how the respect for cultural diversity contributes to fostering international solidarity and cooperation between all nations;

Follow up

The Ministers and other Head of Delegations from Member countries of the Non - Aligned Movement,

44. Agreed to recommend to Heads of States and Governments of the Non-Aligned Movement that the issue of human rights and cultural diversity be integrated into the mainstream Programmes and activities of the NAM;

45. In light of the above decided to establish a "NAM Center for Human Rights and Cultural Diversity" in Tehran. The Center will serve as a focal point to enhance cooperation and dialogue among Non - Aligned Movement member states as well as between these States and other United Nations member states with the purpose of inter alia, the realization of the goals and objectives contained in the present Declaration and Programme of Action.